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SONNETEER ROMPS WINS INAUGURAL CHAMPIONS DAY MARATHON STAKES; ONE RACE LATER, LANERIE NOTCHES 1,000TH CAREER WIN AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

LOUISVILLE, KY (Tuesday, April 30, 2019) – Calumet Farm’s **Sonneteer** roared past **Royal Artillery** at mid-stretch and cruised to a 7 ¼-length victory in the inaugural running of the \$115,600 Champions Day Marathon Overnight Stakes Presented by Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance for 3-year-olds and up.

Trained by **Keith Desormeaux** and ridden by **Corey Lanerie**, Sonneteer covered the mile and a half on a fast main track in 2:30.42. For Lanerie, it was his 999th victory at Churchill Downs.

Lanerie notched his 1,000th victory a race later when he guided Smart Shot to the winner’s circle in the eighth race. Lanerie becomes the fourth rider to reach the 1,000 victory milestone joining Pat Day (2,482), Calvin Borel (1,223) and Robby Albarado (1,180). It was Lanerie’s third victory on the afternoon.

“I’m going home a winner today,” Lanerie said. “I’m blessed to ride for some great owners and trainers. This win means a lot to me and my career.”

The winning time shattered a nearly 18-year-old track record at the distance. The previous mark was 2:32.02 and set by **A Storm Is Brewing** on June 17, 2001.

Pinson led the field through fractions of :24.48, :48.78 and 1:14.69 with Sonneteer in closest pursuit. Going into the far turn, Royal Artillery surged to the front and held that advantage to mid-stretch when Sonneteer raced past.

The victory was worth \$70,610 and increased Sonneteer’s earnings to \$583,776 with a record of 25-3-5-4 that now includes two stakes victories. Sonneteer, a Kentucky-bred son of Midnight Lute out of the Half Ours mare Ours, finished 16th in the 2017 Kentucky Derby behind **Always Dreaming**.

Favored in the field of six, Sonneteer returned \$5.80, \$3.40 and \$2.80. Royal Artillery, ridden by **Robby Albarado**, returned \$10.80 and \$5.20 and finished 3 ¼ lengths in front of **Biblical** who paid \$3.80 to show under **Luis Saez**.

It was another 3 ¼ lengths back to **Looking for Eight**, who was followed in order by Pinson and **Krewe Chief**.

Racing continues Wednesday with a 10-race program that begins at 12:45 p.m. (all times Eastern). Highlighting the program is the 26th running of the \$125,000 Kentucky Juvenile for 2-year-olds going five furlongs on the main track. The Kentucky Juvenile will go as the afternoon’s ninth race with a 4:52 post time.

CHAMPIONS DAY MARATHON QUOTES

COREY LANERIE (rider of Sonneteer, winner) – “The race set up perfectly for us. I was sitting behind horses and was trying to be as patient as possible. It’s a long way to go 1 ½ miles so I was being as patient as possible. When I turned for home and asked him to go, he responded well and kept on going.”

JULIE CLARK (assistant trainer of Sonneteer, winner) – “We’ve always wanted to get this horse to go long. When this race came about this year it was perfect for him. You don’t find many 1 ½ mile races around the country.”

IGNACIO CORREAS IV (trainer of Royal Artillery, runner-up) – “He ran a great race today. With not many 1 ½ mile races around the country, we may go to Belmont for his next race.”

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